

Serial No.: 10/550,734
Atty. Docket No.: P70816US0

REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed concurrently with an RCE.

The Final Office Action mailed June 25, 2008, has been carefully reviewed and, by this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 11, 22 and 23. Claims 11-24 are pending in the application. Claims 11, 22 and 23 are independent.

The Examiner rejected claims 11-14, 16-18 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over GB 2 377 177 to Bray, et al. ("Bray"). Also under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the Examiner rejected claim 15 as being unpatentable over Bray in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,346,653 to Sessions et al., and rejected claim 19 as being unpatentable over Bray in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,998,509 to Nielsen.

As set forth in amended claim 11, the present invention is directed to a wound dressing including a web of gel-forming fibers or fibers soluble in wound exudates and a *non-absorbent* reinforcing layer attached to the web. The web has a density in the range of 5-60 g/m², and the reinforcing layer has a density in the range of 15-40 g/m². The resulting dressing is light in weight while still having sufficient strength so as to be easy to handle and remove in one piece (see page 3, lines 7-12 and lines 28-31). This is not shown or suggested by the prior art.

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Bray discloses a wound dressing having a layer of gel-forming fabric backed by a reinforcing layer that is *superabsorbent* so as to have a *high liquid-holding capacity* (see page 2, line 15). Hence, Bray teaches against a *non-absorbent* reinforcing layer as is claimed by the present invention. Nor does Bray give any indication that would suggest to the skilled person that the superabsorbent reinforcing layer could be replaced with a non-absorbent layer. On the contrary, the superabsorbent reinforcing layer is a key aspect of the wound dressing as clearly disclosed in Bray.

To the extent that the Examiner may consider the single mention of an optional liquid-permeable fibrous layer on page 3, lines 1-2 to teach a non-absorbent reinforcing layer, Applicants point out that there is nothing in Bray that states that this fibrous layer is reinforcing. In fact, the required density of the superabsorbent reinforcing layer necessary to achieve the high liquid-holding capacity of such layer suggests there is no need for a *further reinforcing* layer. Nor is there anything to suggest any particular density range for the fibrous layer identified in such passing manner, let alone the specific range set forth in claim 11.

For at least the foregoing reasons, claim 11 is patentable over the prior art. Claims 22 and 23, which also

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specify a non-absorbent reinforcing layer, are also patentable over Bray and the secondary references for the same reasons as claim 11. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of claims 11, 22 and 23 is therefore requested.

Claims 12-21 and 24 are also in condition for allowance as claims properly dependent on an allowable base claim and for the subject matter contained therein.

With this amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, the Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned attorney so that the present application can receive an early Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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